THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (LUKE 2: 11).

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JOHN MILLER'S CHRISTMAS.

IT was Christmas eve.

A storm raged. The sleet fell with blinding force, as the north wind violently shook his snow-covered wings. Drifts formed wherever a tree, a fence, a house interposed an obstruction. It was seasonable weather, but the evening was one of those on which a cozy home, with a cheerful fire in the grate, fills the human heart with sweet gratitude and happiness.

The home of John Miller, however, was not the abode of happiness on this Christmas eve. To be sure, there was a fire in the grate, but somehow it did not look cheerful. There were things good to eat on the table, but they had been left untouched. Mrs. Miller, a handsome, middle-aged woman, had buried her face in her hands and was sobbing convulsively. Her husband was seated carelessly in an arm-chair, staring into the fire, without, apparently, seeing anything. There was a vacant expression in his eyes. His thoughts stood still. He seemed to be paralyzed. There was on the floor an opened letter, which had fallen from his hands. Once in a while he heaved a deep sigh, as if he were making an effort to throw off a load which rested upon his chest, as a nightmare; but he could do no more than cry out, "O God!" concentrating in that exclamation all the pain he felt, all his despair.

John Miller's oldest boy, Tom, a promising lad of nineteen, had gone to the front. He had felt it his duty to respond to the call of his king and country. His fond parents would not, at first, give their consent. He was too young. There were plenty of others. He would not be needed. The war would soon be over. But Tom would not be persuaded. He was a loving, dutiful son. But it seemed as if an irresistible force impelled him towards the army. He could not shake off that feeling. "Why," he asked himself,

"should I see so many of my friends face danger and death for our empire and for me, without giving them my poor aid?" That was the unanswerable question before which a father's fond devotion, and a mother's all-embracing love had been silenced. And so Tom had enlisted.

The day of farewell had been sad. But the Millers were God-fearing people, according to their light and understanding; therefore, when the matter had been settled finally, they had gathered in their family circle, and the head of the house had read from the Bible, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (Ps. 46: 7); "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee" (Ps. 91: 7), and many other passages. A feeling of indescribable peace and bliss had filled their souls, as they had read such words of comfort. And then they had kneeled down together, and John Miller had prayed, as he never prayed before, for strength to put himself and his loved ones into the hands of Omnipotence, and for that perfect trust which brings rest and peace. "Not my will," he had concluded, "but Thine, be done"; to which an earnest, Amen! had come from those who had kneeled beside him. The next day Tom had gone.

There was an empty place in that home. John Miller was more silent than usual. Life did not seem the same to him. The sun did not shine as it used to do. The food did not taste the same. So true is it that even in this world our outward surroundings reflect the conditions of our minds. Mrs. Miller went about her housework with heavy steps, and now and then, when she was reminded of her absent boy—her sweet boy to whom she had given of her own life—reminded by the things he had worn, the books he had read, the photographs he had collected, the trinkets he had been so fond of, a silent tear stole down her cheek. For,

"The bravest battle that ever was fought,
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you'll find it not,
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.
Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
With sword or noble pen;
Nay, not with eloquent word or thought,
From the mouths of wonderful men.
But deep in the walled-up woman's heart—
Of woman that would not yield,
But bravely, silently bore her part—
Lo! there is the battlefield."*

For some time Tom had written as frequently as circumstances would permit. His letters were cheerful and patriotic. He had avoided subjects the mention of which would have caused undue

*Joaquin Miller.

anxiety and pain. I one letter he said "the boys" had become used to the enemy's shells. "They do not worry us any more; we laugh at them; but we duck when we get under rifle fire." In another letter he described an engagement. "The advance," he wrote, "was preceded by a heavy bombardment. When the time came, we rushed rapidly up the hill. The enemy attacked our left with some success, but we held our position. All day and all night the carnage went on. In the morning the enemy charged our position with great fury, but soon our artillery got to work. The unsuspecting attackers were caught in a trap, and were swept away by the hundreds in a terrific storm of explosives. As the shells exploded, huge chunks of soil were thrown into the air, mingled with human bodies, and parts of bodies. It was a ghastly sight. Few of the attacking enemy were left to tell the tale. At nightfall the fighting gradually died down, both sides being exhausted." In other letters he described the daily routine, the hospitals, how the wounded were taken care of, etc. He never tired of praising the work of the nurses. At one time he wrote, "When many of us were gassed, and nearly done for, one of the nurses stood to her guns amid the awful sights and did her best! She carried a wounded friend of mine to the ambulance; she worked like a Trojan; one poor chap actually died in her arms. For weeks she's been going backwards and forwards, day and night, through awful areas of 'gas,' and one time she never closed an eye for thirty-six hours! Her hands were bruised and bleeding. Her name, and where she comes from? I don't know! We chaps here just call her 'The Angel.'" Such were his letters.

Then, suddenly, no more messages came. And, finally, after an anxious wait, which seemed interminable, the blow fell. Word was received that Private Tom Miller was no more. He had given his life for his country.

A comrade had, considerately, furnished some details. They had spent the night together in the trenches. In the morning a shell had severed the telephone wires. Without a moment's hesitation Tom had leaped over the parapet, uncoiling a new wire. "Like a streak of lightning," to quote from the letter, he had run through a rain of bullets to the point where the line was broken, and repaired it, and then gone to another spot where repair was needed. All the time some of the enemy's rifle fire had been concentrated upon him, and at last he fell, pierced by six bullets.

Such was the simple story.

It had just reached the parents, and pierced their hearts. It was sad news—doubly sad at Christmas time, when all the world should join in the angelic chorus, "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

* * *

In their humble, but comfortable lodge two "Mormon" elders,

Nephi Trueman and Charles Long, had just finished their frugal meal. In their masculine, awkward way, they were clearing the table, and, while doing so, were entertaining each other with reminiscences of their Christmas dinners at their homes in the far West. They could not help contrasting their present fare of bread and jam with the feasts prepared by loving hands under the parental roof, which they could remember as far back as the earliest days of childhood. And yet, they were thankful for an opportunity to bear their testimony to their fellowmen.

The few dishes put away, the two made themselves comfortable by the fire.

Then they talked about their homes. Familiar photographs were examined with new interest. Letters were re-read for the twentieth time, perhaps. Confidences were exchanged. They counted the months and weeks since they left their respective homes, and the days that yet remained until they could expect to be released. They admitted that the time had gone rapidly, and deplored the fact that they had accomplished so little. They discussed the war and its effects upon missionary work. They wandered from one subject to another and, finally, exchanged experiences while tracting. Elder Trueman was relating this story: Only the other day he had met a lady who, when offered a tract, abused him and accused him of every crime in the Decalogue. He listened patiently for some time, and then insisted on her meeting him in court the following day, either to prove her accusations, or answer to a charge of libel, whereupon she calmed down and admitted that she had no proof, but was only repeating what others had said. She now listened to the elder, and the outcome was that she invited him to come and meet her husband and talk to him, which invitation was gladly accepted.

At this stage of the story, Elder Trueman happened to notice that his companion was occupied with thoughts of his own. "What is the matter, Charlie?" he asked.

"I hardly know," was the reply. "Something prompts me to go visiting."

"What! In this weather?"

"That's just it. If it were a fine evening with soft, caressing moon-light, I might mistake the impulse for a whim; but under the circumstances, I am convinced that it is the Spirit of the Lord whispering in my heart."

There was a long silence.

Elder Trueman was the first to speak. "I'll tell you what, Charlie," he said; "There is a revelation which says that, 'if you behold a spirit manifested that you cannot understand * * * ye shall ask of the Father in the name of Jesus, and if he give not unto you that spirit, then you may know that it is not of God.' Let us put it to the test of prayer."

This was agreed upon, and the two asked their heavenly Father

for guidance and light. The prayer was heard. Light came. The last word of the prayer had hardly been uttered when Charlie rose and, with firm determination, said,

"I am going."

"If you go, I go," was the reply of his companion.

Comfortably wrapped up they set out together, they knew not where.

Charlie took the lead.

The storm raged. But they were strong young men, not weakened by tobacco, or any kind of stimulants, and they were used to physical exertion. They felt that they were in the service of the Master at that moment, and they did not mind the fury of the elements. They struggled on bravely, each busy with his own thoughts, until, after perhaps an hour's walk, they found themselves in a street they had recently tracted. They had stopped, quite accidentally they thought, at a door from which they had been turned with invectives as bitter as gall. Was that the place to which the Spirit had led them?

They hardly knew what to think. It was a strange experience, and they were, for a moment, undecided what to do.

* * *

John Miller, as stated at the beginning of this story, had sunk into an armchair, before the fire, in utter despair. But the sensation of numbness that had come over him was but a calm before the storm. Presently he rose and paced the floor. And then his pent-up feelings burst forth as a mountain torrent over a broken dam. "Is there a God?" he asked. "If so, where was He when my poor boy was pierced by the cruel bullets?"

His wife rose, terrified at his words. Gently she put her arms around his neck and tried to calm him. At this moment she was the stronger of the two.

But he was not in a mood to listen. Rudely he pushed her away, and was about to say something, when—

There was a timid knock at the door.

"Hark, dear!" Mrs. Miller said. But nobody went to open.

The knock was heard again.

Nobody moved. Superstitious fear had, perhaps, seized John Miller. Had he not been about to blaspheme? And on Christmas eve? Does not conscience make cowards of us all?

Again the knock came, louder and more insistent.

Finally, he went to the door, and there stood the "Mormon" elders, dripping wet.

"You!"

It was the only exclamation John Miller could think of. His astonishment obscured his vocabulary. He well remembered the day when in mad rage he had driven them away.

"Yes, we!" Elder Long answered, as calmly as if he had been the servant of the King, "and we would be indebted to you, if you

could possibly extend to us for a few moments the hospitality of your fireside. We have a message for you."

"A *message*?"

"Yes, sir."

"For *me*?"

"Yes, sir. And for your wife."

John Miller, by an impatient gesture, indicated that he was about to break out as he had done before; but his wife interposed.

"John," she said, "we need somebody to talk to us to-night, if ever. Let them come in, for my sake. Let us listen.

Mr. Miller did not relish the idea; but he was, at heart, a good man, and, like all good men, he yielded to the gentle influence of his wife. He had learned that her intuition frequently was a safer guide than his reason.

Presently the elders were seated by the fire, surrounded by the family. Elder Long related the manner in which the Spirit had guided them to their house that evening, and as he unfolded the remarkable story, the hearts of the listeners melted. The Spirit of the Lord moved upon the chaos that prevailed in their souls. It became clear that the Lord had sent these two messengers to them, as He sent Peter to Cornelius, Philip to the Ethiopian, or Ananias to Saul, and they were filled with wonder, mingled with joy. They drank in, eagerly, every word the elders spoke.

For the first time in their lives they heard the Bible doctrine about faith, repentance, baptism, the reception of the Holy Ghost, divine authority, the necessity of obedience to the laws of God, and the condition of the departed ones on the other side of the veil. This in particular arrested their attention. They could not hear enough. And as the elders dwelt upon the glorious truth that, through the gospel, husband and wife will belong to each other for ever; that, in the hereafter, they will be reunited with their children, and, with them, progress throughout all eternity, they seemed to behold the heavens opened to their view.

The time passed rapidly. It was midnight when the elders rose to depart. But before they separated John Miller and his wife applied for baptism.

Never before had they had such a joyful Christmas.

Never before had those two faithful elders felt happier in their labor. They agreed that that evening was worth all the time they had spent in the mission field, and every sacrifice made to enable them to go abroad as ambassadors of the kingdom of heaven.

Mrs. Miller, after the elders had left, tenderly embraced her husband, and he closed around her his strong arms.

"John, dear," she said "I am thinking . . .

She hesitated.

"Yes, dear?"

"I am thinking that God had to take him from us, in order to make us accept the gospel."

"I am sure of it," John answered. "I have seen the shepherd, when he wants the sheep to come into a new enclosure, take lambs and put them there first. Then the sheep follow. The Good Shepherd has taken one of our lambs, to make us willing to follow Him."

And before they retired, they read together the matchless story of the birth of the Redeemer.

Then Miller, his heart too full for silence, said to his wife, "What a fool I have been! I have refused to receive the message from the Master. I have abused His messengers and treated them with contempt. I have listened to His enemies. I have turned away from the voice of the Shepherd and followed, as if fascinated, the howl of wolves. But the Lord has found me at last!"

And thus John Miller and his wife celebrated their Christmas.

The Star of Bethlehem shone brilliantly upon them. And in its light they sang,

"O give thanks unto the Lord,
For He is good;
Because His mercy endureth for ever."

J. M. S.

MY TESTIMONY.

I AM a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I am righteously proud of the fact. I never can sufficiently thank my heavenly Father for the privilege he has given me of bearing a testimony to the truth of His gospel, as taught by the elders of Israel. I know of a surety that this work is the work of the Lord. I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the living God. I also know, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that this work in which our Church is engaged (preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ) shall and must prosper, "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Would to God I had the eloquence of Paul, or the pen of David, to praise and bless my heavenly Father for the knowledge He has given me, and the joy of being alive in this day of the world's history. If anyone will ask of God and do His will, he shall get an assurance, even as I have, of the truth of our doctrines, or rather, Christ's doctrines, for He founded our Church.

EMILY W. FOOTE.

AS there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God. Man is conscious of a universal soul within or behind his individual life, wherein, as in a firmament, the natures of Justice, Truth, Love, Freedom, arise and shine.—R. W. EMERSON.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1915.

EDITORIAL.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE.

It is over nineteen hundred years since the advent to this world, in a mortal tabernacle, of the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, who was announced by a celestial choir chanting the ever memorable strain, "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

It has been observed that when He came, there was peace all over the world; but that condition was but temporary. His rejection was followed by devastating wars, and the overthrow of the nation that rejected Him.

Throughout the history of the human family something similar recurs, again and again. Christianity was established all over the civilized world during the first centuries, but when the Christians were persecuted, the religion of the great Nazarene abolished, and another system established, wars and bloodshed, famine and pestilence, swept the earth. This is all set forth under the grandest imagery of which human language is capable, in the Revelation by John, where the breaking of seals, the soundings of trumpets, the rolling of thunders, the pouring out of vials of wrath, signify a succession of calamities, especially in the form of wars and carnage.

To-day we are witnessing a struggle, the like of which the world has never seen before. There are many homes to which Christmas this year will bring no cheer, because of the absence of loved ones. The spirit of hatred is burning among nations and individuals. Already students of the prophetic word are beginning to ask whether we are not living at the time of the pouring out of the "seventh vial" (Rev. 16: 17-21), during which "there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent." Certain it is that huge missiles are now being thrown from guns, or dropped from aircraft, which a prophet might well have described as "great hail," while poisonous gases, liquid fire, submarine torpedoes and mines add to the horrors.

This war has come because the world, as in ancient days, has failed to accept the Lord Jesus, His doctrines, and messengers. That is the Christmas lesson of the battlefields. The roar of cannon and the shriek of bullets, tell us, as in thunders from Sinai, that human programs have failed, and that human wisdom has suffered shipwreck; that education and culture have proved

themselves powerless to redeem the nations from folly and crime, from self-destruction and murder, and that the song of the angels needs to be re-sung on earth. Mankind needs to hear anew what the shepherds were told from the open heavens, on the hillsides of Judea, that a Savior has been born who is able to redeem His people from their sins.

As far back as 1843, the Prophet Joseph Smith warned the world that "the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed previous to the coming of the Son of Man, will begin in South Carolina" (Doc. and Cov. 130:12), and that it would arise through the slave question. That prophecy was fulfilled to the letter, when the Civil War of the United States broke out in 1861. It is still being fulfilled. For we are living in the age immediately preceding the coming of the Lord.

The world must be aroused to a realization of the fact that it needs the guidance of the Spirit of God, to enable it to emerge from century-old errors, and to find the way to light and truth. It must be made to accept revelation. The nations must learn that they need to repent of deeds of violence and impurity and dishonesty, and to establish national, as well as individual, life on a basis of truth, justice, and peace. They must be made to realize that nothing but man's continued wilful sin can prevent the world-wide dawning of this divinely fraternal and happy day, and that the acceptance of the gospel is their only salvation. God is thundering this lesson throughout the world today. The war is His testimony. It has followed, as stated in the prophecies, the gentle testimony of His servants.

J. M. S.

JOSEPH, THE PROPHET.

To-day, December the 23rd, is the 110th anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Joseph Smith, whom the world is beginning to recognize as one of the most remarkable men of this age. The Latter-day Saints may well remember him as an instrument in the hands of the Lord through whom they have been blessed with spiritual light and knowledge beyond the reach of the most advanced philosophy, or mere human theology, and—many of them—with temporal prosperity far surpassing their fondest dreams. And in remembering him, they should renew their determination to serve the Lord faithfully, for in no other way can they, in reality, honor his memory.

How different the world would be at this time, had it accepted and carried out the teachings of Joseph Smith!

There would now be a universal brotherhood of man; for he taught that all men are the children of God, entitled to equal opportunities and privileges. Class distinctions founded on accidents of birth, of wealth, or education, would have been

eliminated, because those who held such privileges and gifts would have been using them only in the service of their less favored fellowmen.

There would be no destitution among God's children; for, under the United Order all men would have sufficient for their wants.

There would be very little sickness; for by the observance of the Word of Wisdom, men and women would gradually have attained to physical perfection.

There would be no crime, for men and women would have kept the commandments of God, each respecting the life, property, happiness, and rights of others.

There would be no strife between employers and employes, for perfect justice would prevail in the industrial world.

There would be no error in views and opinions regarding religious subjects; for unity would have been obtained, through revelation from God, on all important matters concerning faith and practise. There would, consequently, be but one church, and that the Church of Christ, and all the evils of conflict in Christendom would have been swallowed up in the complete victory of truth.

There would be no war between nations, for the Lord would have taught His children to live together in peace founded on justice.

Such would be the condition at this time, if the world had accepted the message which the Prophet Joseph Smith brought us.

Reader! Will you do your bit in hastening the coming of the new age of the highest civilization foreshadowed in the Word of God and heralded by the prophets of this dispensation? If so, accept the gospel as taught by the Prophet Joseph. It was given in order that, through it, the world might be saved. Join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and carry out its teachings every day of your lives. Set an example to your fellowmen. By so doing, you will help in establishing the blessed conditions which will obtain on earth when the kingdoms of the world shall have become the kingdom of the Son of Man.

J. M. S.

MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS.

BUT little is known of the mother of our Savior, this "highly favored" among women, through whom "the Word," the Christ, "was made flesh." One great division of Christendom has surrounded her with all the glory of a goddess; another has almost ignored her mission in the plan of salvation.

Passing by the fables concerning Mary, the earliest historic incident in her life on record, is the appearance to her of the angel Gabriel, who announced that she was destined to become the mother of the Messiah. That she was, through a long line of

ancestors, and moral and religious training, qualified for that mission, is clear from the genealogies extant.

Almost immediately after that announcement, she hastened from Nazareth, where she lived, to the home of her cousin, Elizabeth, possibly in Hebron, and the meeting of these two women was one of mutual exchange of sacred confidences and congratulations. That Mary was a highly gifted poetess is known from the magnificent poem she composed while sojourning in the home of Elizabeth:

"My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior."

It is a poem closely analogous to the song of Hannah, or the hymn of Judith, but it is animated by a more exalted spirit and forms a grand prelude to the new dispensation.

To Mary's motherly care the child Jesus was entrusted. As the poetic picture presents it:

"The Virgin stills the crying
Of Jesus, sleepless lying;
And, singing for his pleasure,
Thus calls upon her treasure:
My darling, do not weep;
My Jesu, sleep."

She laid the foundation of the religious knowledge which made Jesus, at the age of twelve years, a marvel among the boys who came to the temple precincts to be examined by the rabbis and teachers of the people. She was present at the crucifixion. She was at the sepulchre. It is thought that she was a witness to the ascension. It is known that she was among the faithful few who "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," before the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, for her name is specially mentioned by Luke (Acts 1: 14), probably because of her great influence upon the disciples at that critical time. Others might have lost faith in her divine Son; but not she. She was evidently a center of strength in that hour of prayer and waiting—that hour just before the break of a new day. Mary, the mother, was filled with the spirit of her glorious Son.

After the foundation of the church, Mary went beyond the veil; when and where, history does not record. One legend says she died at Jerusalem, and was buried in Gethsemane. Another has it that she moved to Ephesus, and lived there some time with John. The latter is less probable, because none of the apostles mention her, as they, no doubt, would have done, had she lived for many years in any of the prominent branches of the church.

The angel who visited Zachariah and Mary is called Gabriel (Luke 1: 11-26). He is the same personage who came to Daniel to explain the vision of the Ram and the He-goat (Dan. 8), and on another

occasion, to communicate the prediction of seventy weeks (Dan. 9: 21-27). In all probability, it was also he who appeared and unfolded to Daniel the *Scripture of Truth* (Dan. 10: 21), on which occasion the prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed him, until Michael came to his assistance (Dan. 10: 13). Gabriel also appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith (Doc. and Cov. 128: 21), declaring, as other messengers had done, the nature of his dispensation, his rights, power, majesty and glory.

From the Doctrine and Covenants we know that "there are no angels who minister to this earth but those who do belong, or have belonged, to it" (Doc. and Cov. 130 : 5), and the spirit of revelation indicates that Gabriel was Noah in mortality, as Michael was Adam. We may say, then, that, as the angel Moroni was the special messenger to usher in the dispensation in which we live, preparatory to the second advent, so Noah, as the angel Gabriel, had a special mission to announce the first advent of our Lord.

J. M. S.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF GOD AND MAN.

ONE of the grandest of gifts that God has ever granted to man is that of friendship. That man is happy who has good friends; that man is happy who can be a friend to someone. A very wise person has said, "Take away my gold and I still live; take away my position in life, and I still live; take away my reputation in life, and I still live, for reputation and gold are but gifts of men; but take away my friends and I die, for friends are God's best gifts to me."

Consider the case of Julius, the great Cæsar of Rome. He was killed by revolutionists, among whom was Brutus, a man whom Cæsar had always considered as his friend. Cæsar had gone to the senate hall to preside at a meeting there. The conspirators gathered around him as if to present a petition. At a given signal, however, they rushed upon him with drawn daggers. For a moment Cæsar defended himself, but seeing Brutus among the conspirators, he exclaimed, "Thou too, Brutus!" Then he wrapped his cloak about him and received unresistingly the further thrusts of the murderers. Cæsar had always considered Brutus as his friend; but when he saw that the friendship apparently was broken, he considered life not worth living.

We know that true friendship implies, or includes, confidence and love. A friend is a person in whom an unfaltering trust can be placed; one in whom we can put our faith and confidence. A friend will not forsake a person, even if that person be reduced to the depths of poverty or sorrow. A friend is always ready to warn against a life of unhappiness and sin. If we have a true friend, one on whom we can rely and in whom we can confide, we

shall be happy, though we are shunned by our fellowmen, and the world turns against us.

In the Bible many very good examples of friendship are to be found. The friendship that existed between David, the shepherd, and Jonathan, the son of King Saul, was very strong. Jonathan saved David from being killed by the king. Saul was jealous of David, and time after time he tried to take the life of the shepherd boy; but Jonathan was the means of saving him.

The friendship between Ruth, the Moabite, and Naomi, her mother-in-law, also is a good example. Naomi had come to the land where Ruth dwelt, and here one of her sons married Ruth. Soon after, the son died, and Naomi decided to go back to her people. She was about to leave Ruth, when this pure Moabitish woman said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." These verses are considered among the most beautiful in the Bible, because they portray the sacred friendship existing between two daughters of God. To follow after Naomi, Ruth gave up her people to accept another people, and to accept the God of Naomi. Surely, a great sacrifice; but no more than true friendship called for.

But good examples of friendship are found outside the Bible, too. Every day, in every city, sacrifices are made by friends that rival the Biblical examples. It has often been said that our parents are our best friends on the earth. In the majority of cases this is so, but only because they would rather die than see us drop to the depths of degradation and ignominy. We can say that such action on the part of the parents would be friendship, because friendship implies love, assurance and confidence.

There is a friendship, however, that is far greater than the friendship between mortals: The friendship of God. Christ, at one time, speaking to His disciples, said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15: 13-15). From this we learn that Christ is our friend, and that those who do His will are His friends. In the spiritual life before the earth was created, Christ, as our brother and our friend, offered to come to earth and suffer for the sin of Adam; in other words, to be offered up as a sacrifice. In this way He was to release us from the penalty of death, which fell to us as a natural inheritance from our common earthly parents.

Christ, as a true friend to us, realizing that in no other way could we be released from the dread penalty of death, left His

courts of glory on high and came to earth and died for us. He was God even before He left the spiritual state, but was born into this world as a babe, like other people. Think of the love He had for us; to leave His royal home on high and be so humbled as to be born in a manger. And His humbleness did not end there; He was persecuted, as no other man has ever been, and finally he suffered death upon the cross. He was even a friend to those who subjected Him to this torture, for He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

True friends never ask us to do anything that will harm us; on the other hand, they are always willing to help us by requiring only needful things of us. We have such confidence in our earthly friends that often our actions are guided by their suggestions. We should put even more trust in our heavenly Friend, and do those things He requires at our hands.

Leeds. JOSEPH F. WORTHEN.

WHO AND WHAT ARE THE SAINTS?

THE saints were commonly known as ancient persons who were so much occupied with prayer and preparation for another world, and so contemptuous of the things of the present, that they were not, and could never be, congenial or fit companions for the man of affairs, the soldier, the politician, or the leader of commerce. Amongst the thoughtless or the irreligious the term has become one of derision.

This conception of a saint is largely the result of confusing the martyrs of religious history. The fanatic, who suffered for some particular whim of his own, long after the apostasy, is not distinguished from such men as John the Revelator, or Paul, or Stephen. Learning of the Savior's humility and sacrifice, some of those later martyrs sought to emulate Him by artificial means; and so we find them resorting to all sorts of fantastic things. When they read of his counseling His disciples to be "not of the world," they thought it meant that they should retire into seclusion, and the building of monasteries in out-of-the-way places was the result. One man, at least, was so imbued with his idea, that he erected a building with no windows except one, at the top, so that he might see nothing but the sky! "Sacrifice" was believed to mean that the disciple should forego a sufficiency of food, or clothing; whilst even voluntary physical torture was resorted to by some. Humility, or other virtues of the faithful, were similarly distorted.

The various churches are not quite agreed as to who should be styled "saints." The apostles and early disciples are agreed upon by all, but many of the later martyrs were given that title by the individual churches, for whose creeds they had submitted to the

torch, or the block. Thus we find a number of "Saints" were created during the bitter struggle between the Roman Catholics and the English Protestants of the middle ages.

The origin of the title "saint" is a simple one. It denoted a member of the Church of Christ. The humblest adherent of this Church has just as much right to call himself a saint as his leader, or the member who is called upon to suffer for his principles. Much of the misunderstanding which has arisen in connection with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is due to an error regarding this simple matter.

In a recent article the Rev. R. J. Campbell, late of the City Temple, London, said, in speaking of war and sacrifice, "War has been the means, more than any other agency, of bringing out on a grand scale, that truth of sacrifice, without which flesh can never be made to serve the ends of the Spirit, and the kingdom of the soul be won." Mr. Campbell is wrong. Ministers of the true gospel in every age are braver than soldiers; for they brave the finger of scorn and the hiss of derision (the greatest of all injuries to normally constituted men), as well as physical torture from their opponents.

Downham Market. FRED. L. W. BENNETT.

A JUST CAUSE.

WE cannot but admire any person who has the courage to stand up in front of an audience, and declare boldly that his cause is just. We who believe ours to be a just cause, ought to be willing to stand up in any place and declare it to the people, testifying of the hope that burns within us, and, as we are told in I. Peter 3: 15, be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason for the hope that is within us. And those people who are earnestly searching after truth, we should invite to any of our meetings to hear our message, for our message concerns everybody, now that we are passing through this, the greatest crisis in the history of the world.

These men have died willingly for what they considered a just cause, laying down their lives for their friends, and by this manner they have certainly earned a great reward. Christ says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend." They could not have given any more than their lives. It is the greatest sacrifice of all.

The question has been discussed by religous people, recently, as to the future hope of those who have sacrificed their lives in this great conflict. What, then, is their hope? Not very long ago I was told that they could have no hope whatever, unless they had put on the saving name of Christ by baptism. Thousands of them have not been baptized; neither have they heard the message

which we are proclaiming to the world. But if they have never heard the message, how can they be condemned? Or, how can they have no hope? We, then, will not judge them by saying they are without hope, but, rather, let us say they have hope now, just as they had hope in this life, for if they had not had hope of a life to come, they would have been of men most miserable.

Through the plan of life and salvation, as laid down by God, a way has been opened whereby all can, in due time, hear the word of salvation; if not here, then across the borders of the great unknown, for it was there that Christ went and preached to those spirits which were in prison, who had been disobedient, and had not given heed to the warnings of Noah (I. Peter 3). This, then, is the hope of all who have died, and should at all times be a source of comfort to those who have read of their dear ones being killed in action. The way to this great hope is through the Church of Christ, for there it is that the work of baptism for the dead goes on, continually, and although this work has been great in the past, yet the days are not far distant when it will be much greater, and however great it becomes, we shall do all that is required of us. Freely we have received; freely we shall give.

Halifax. ARTHUR PRIESTLEY (R.A.M.C.).

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptisms.—A baptismal service was held at the Latter-day Saints' Chapel, Sycamore Road, Handsworth, Birmingham (Birmingham conference), on Sunday, December 12th, 1915, when one soul was added to the fold of Christ. Elder Sidney R. Godfrey officiated.

DIED.

FREEMAN.—September 17th, of wounds received while serving in His Majesty's army, at the battle of Aisne, Fred Freeman. Deceased was born at Olney, Buckinghamshire, December 31st, 1892, and baptized August 21st, 1910. Brother Freeman died a faithful Latter-day Saint.

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